

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Annual Report to the San Francisco Bay Area State Legislative Delegation

January 2007



MOBILITY

SMART GROWTH

ACCESSIBILITY

SECURITY

TECHNOLOGY





**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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January 2007

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To Our State Legislators:

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is pleased to submit this report summarizing our legislative priorities for 2007. After the Legislature's tremendous achievement of placing the infrastructure bond package on the ballot, the focus now shifts to the follow-up legislation required to deliver the benefits promised by these measures. This report contains the Bay Area's submittal to the California Transportation Commission for the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account as well as MTC's policy recommendations for the implementation of the new programs created by Proposition 1B including:

- Trade Corridors Improvement (\$2 billion) & Air Quality (\$1 billion)
- State-Local Partnership Program (\$1 billion)
- Transit System Safety, Security and Disaster Response (\$1 billion)

In addition to the transportation measures, two other statewide measures — Proposition 1C (the housing bond) and Proposition 84 (the park bond) — also raise important transportation and land-use policy questions that will need to be addressed by the Legislature. MTC will work to ensure that the implementing legislation for all of these programs results in cost-effective investments that provide the greatest possible mobility and quality of life benefits to the San Francisco Bay Area.

While the passage of Propositions 1A and 1B is a great step in the right direction, it does not solve our transportation funding challenges. Accordingly, MTC will seek authorization to place a road user fee (levied on gasoline purchased in the nine-county region) on the ballot for local road improvements. This "pennies for potholes" concept will address roughly 80 percent of the region's \$11 billion 25-year shortfall for local streets and roads. We also have a proposal to improve mobility for low-income residents and a recommendation that would ease the administration of the State Transit Assistance program.

Lastly, this report provides an update on various MTC projects, including the Toll Bridge Seismic Retrofit Program, the FasTrak® electronic toll collection system, the award-winning 511 traveler information service and the TransLink® universal transit fare card, now in operation on AC Transit buses and Golden Gate Transit buses and ferries.

We appreciate your interest in transportation issues and look forward to working with you and your staff in the coming months. Should you have any questions or comments about the material in this report, please contact any of the following people:

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Sincerely,

Jon Rubin, Chair

Annual Report to the San Francisco Bay Area State Legislative Delegation

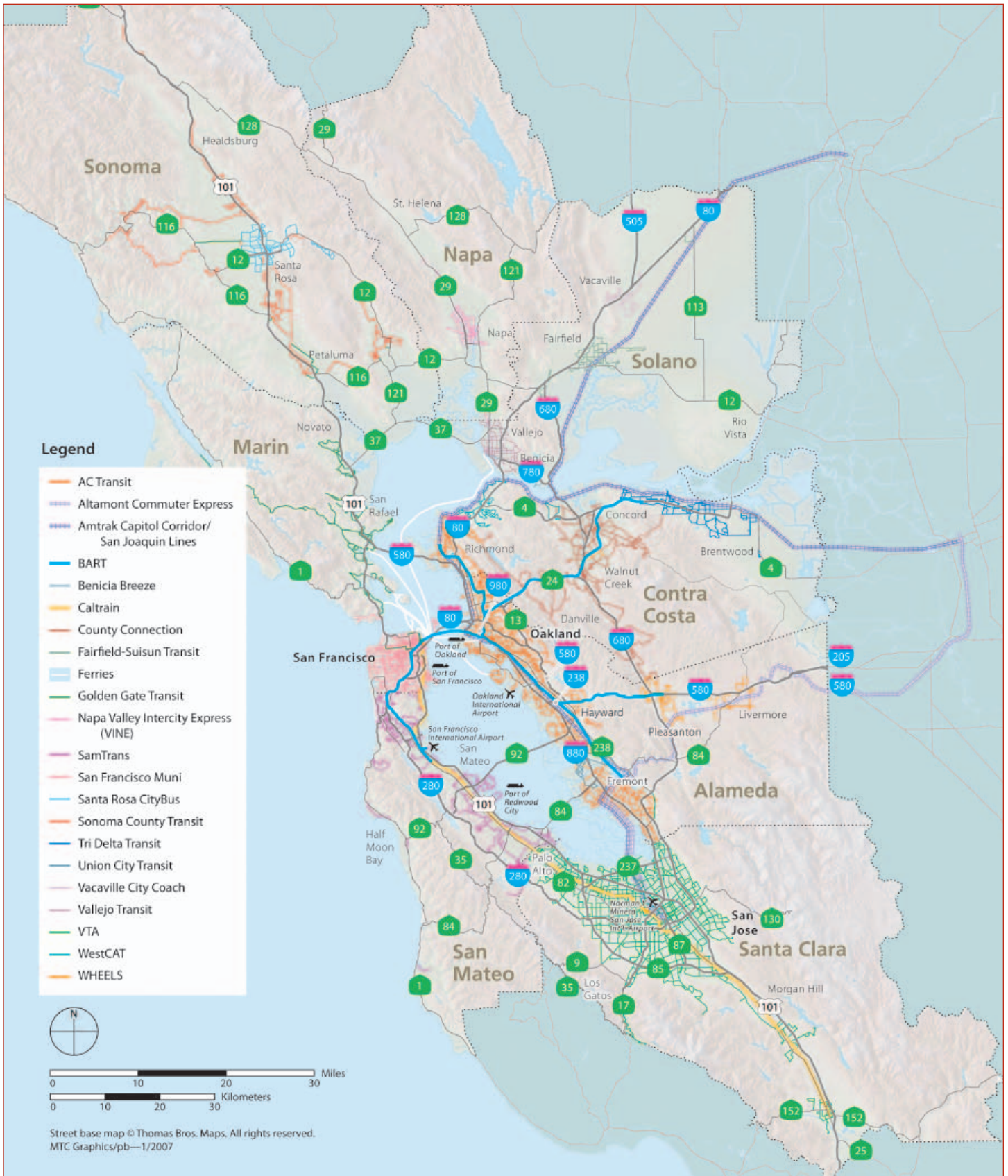
January 2007



Published by the
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Legislation and Public Affairs Section

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San Francisco Bay Area



Note: Dark gray lines indicate highways; the colored lines illustrate the Bay Area's extensive public transit network with its numerous operators.

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State-Local Partnership Program: Match All Major Local Fund Sources

A new bond program that requires follow-up legislation is the \$1 billion State-Local Partnership Program (SLPP). This program is designed to provide local agencies that generate local transportation funds with matching funds over a 5-year period.

Bay Area voters have chosen time and again to tax themselves in order to bring additional transportation funds to the table. Indeed, as shown in the bar graph at right, the revenues from these sales taxes far outstrip annual funds made available in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In fiscal year 2006 alone, voter-approved transportation sales taxes and transit property taxes generated \$800 million, and voter-approved bridge tolls generated approximately \$257 million, totaling over \$1 billion regionwide.

MTC recommends that the State-Local Partnership Program be structured as follows:

- 1** Allow a wide variety of local funding sources — voter-approved sales taxes, tolls and property taxes (shown at lower right), and uniform developer fees — to qualify for matching funds.
- 2** Allow SLPP funds to be used for highway, local road and transit improvements that meet the requirements for general obligation bond expenditures.
- 3** Provide that proceeds are distributed in proportion to each agency's statewide share of eligible matching revenue.
- 4** Provide a mechanism to ensure timely use of funds, such as a requirement that funds be expended within three years of an allocation by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). If project sponsors do not have projects that meet this criteria, their share should be returned to the CTC for redistribution.

Funds Should Be Distributed by a Revenue-Based Formula

While a program with the same name existed in the 1990s, that program had a number of shortcomings that should not be repeated. For instance, project sponsors had little certainty about how much funding they would receive in any given year as their share depended largely on what projects were ready for construction statewide. We propose instead a revenue-based formula program that provides a predictable level of funding. We further propose that funds be programmed in two cycles, the first beginning as soon as possible, and the second beginning after 2008, to give counties or other entities with proposed 2008 ballot measures an opportunity to benefit from this program.

Voter-Approved Bridge Tolls Should Be Eligible

In addition to approving sales tax increases, Bay Area voters have on two occasions — in 1988 and again in 2003 — voted to pass bridge toll increases to fund transportation improvements. While Regional Measure 1 focused primarily on bridge (non-seismic) and highway improvements, Regional Measure 2 (RM 2) funds a large number of transit improvements in the bridge corridors, as well as congestion relief projects. Given the types of projects funded by these measures and the scale of revenue raised, these funds should be eligible for the SLPP. Similar to sales tax measures, which often provide “seed money” for projects, there are a number of projects in RM 2 that require additional funds. In this sense, the SLPP can serve as the last piece of the funding pie, helping to deliver the promises of voter-approved expenditure plans.

Voter-Approved Taxes for Transit Agencies Should Also Be Eligible

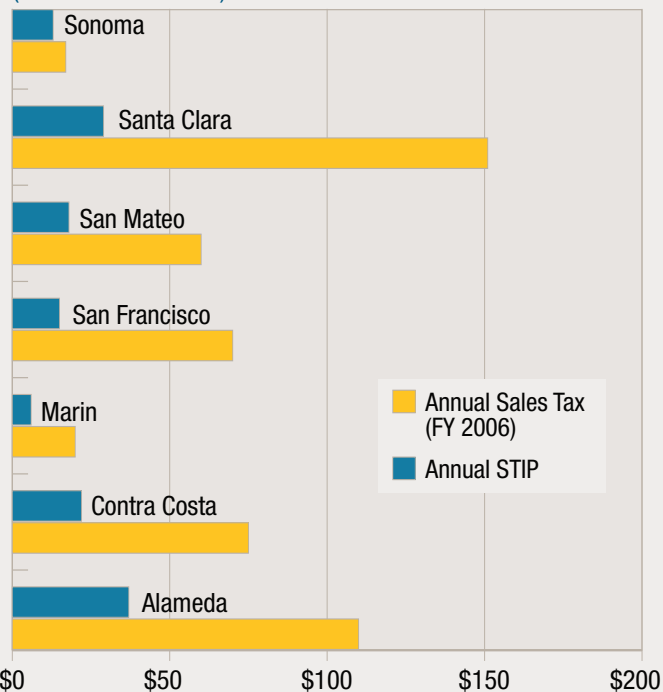
In addition to bridge tolls, voters also have approved property and parcel taxes for two Bay Area transit agencies — Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) and San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). These agencies should also be eligible to receive SLPP funds. Whereas the prior SLPP was restricted to highway and fixed guideway improvements because it was funded by the State Highway Account and subject to Article XIX in the State Constitution, Proposition 1B has no such restrictions.

Project Eligibility Should Match Bond Categories

Consistent with the multimodal programs contained in Proposition 1B, the SLPP should fund a range of projects, including transit, local road rehabilitation and highway improvements. Project eligibility should be as flexible as possible, subject only to the constraints of the bond.

Annual Funding from 2006 STIP vs. Sales Tax*

(Dollars in millions)

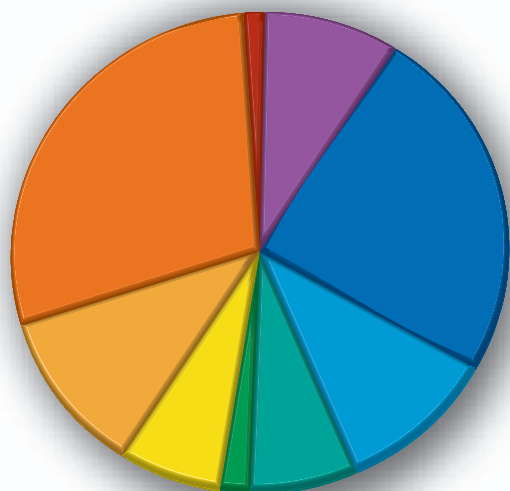


* Includes temporary half-cent transportation sales taxes only.

Source: MTC

Local Bay Area Transportation Revenues, FY 2006

(Dollars in millions)



● \$ 92 AC Transit and BART Property Taxes

● \$257 Voter-Approved Bridge Tolls

Half-Cent Transportation Sales Taxes

● \$110 Alameda County

● \$ 75 Contra Costa County

● \$ 20 Marin County

● \$ 70 San Francisco City/County

● \$120 San Mateo County*

● \$302 Santa Clara County*

● \$ 17 Sonoma County

TOTAL: \$1.06 billion

* Includes permanent half-cent transit sales tax levied in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, as well as temporary half-cent sales tax levied in these counties for multimodal purposes.

Source: Sales tax authorities, transit operators and Bay Area Toll Authority

The Bay Area: Northern California's International Trade Gateway

Goods movement is a critical component of the Bay Area's economic and transportation systems. Whether delivering construction materials or consumer goods to the growing population, or exporting electronics and food throughout the world, a robust goods movement system is essential for both businesses and residents to function and thrive in the Bay Area.

The goods movement industry is an integral part of the Bay Area economy. Over 37 percent of the region's economic output is in manufacturing, freight transportation and the warehouse and distribution business. Moreover, international trade is the fastest growing segment of goods movement in the Bay Area. The Port of Oakland exports a larger volume of containers than it imports and plays an important role in supporting the state's agricultural sector — providing the primary means of transporting produce from the Central Valley to the Pacific Rim.

The region's main corridors for international and national trade are the Altamont (Interstates 880/238/580) and Central (Interstate 80) corridors.

As the Legislature develops statutory guidance for Proposition 1B's \$2 billion Trade Corridors Improvement Fund, we offer the following key policy recommendations for your consideration:

- 1** Priority should be given to international, national and interregional gateways and corridors that are critical to international trade, rather than to local distribution networks.
- 2** Investments should be made in a range of freight modes — truck, rail and maritime.
- 3** Mandated local match should not exceed the 1:1 ratio as specified in Senate Bill 1266 (Perata).
- 4** The 1:1 match ratio should be achieved on a corridor basis — over-match on one project should be allowed to count toward the corridor average.
- 5** Priority should be given to projects that can deliver benefits quickly. Although the legislation does not set strict deadlines for the Trade Corridors program, a similar time frame as the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account program (i.e., in construction by the end of 2012) should be considered.



Trucking on Interstate 880

Working with the Port of Oakland and our neighbors at the Sacramento Council of Governments, the San Joaquin Council of Governments and Stanislaus County, MTC has identified a number of priority candidates for the \$2 billion Trade Corridors Improvement Fund. Key considerations in developing a final proposal will be assessing both the economic and mobility benefits of these projects, and identifying and addressing environmental and community impacts that could arise with their implementation. MTC anticipates releasing its top priority project list in mid-February.

Reduce Emissions at Bay Area Ports

While trade is essential to our region's and state's economies, it brings with it substantial costs in terms of public health, particularly as a result of diesel emissions (a toxic air contaminant). The health impacts of the Port of Oakland are particularly pressing and have received little historic recognition. For instance, diesel emissions in West Oakland near the maritime port are between two and five times higher per square mile than in surrounding urban regions.

Proposition 1B includes \$1 billion for air quality improvements related to freight. MTC offers the following recommendations for this program:

- 1** Require that in awarding these funds the Air Resources Board (ARB) give consideration to geographic balance, as is required in the Trade Corridors Improvement Fund.
- 2** Provide a role for regional air quality management districts in the selection of projects.
- 3** Require that ARB use a substantial portion of this funding to address the impacts of future trade growth — anticipated to result from new infrastructure funded by the Trade Corridors Improvement Fund — on air quality and emissions.
- 4** Do not impose a local match requirement for these funds, as no requirement was stipulated in Senate Bill 1266. The Bay Area communities facing the greatest air quality challenges associated with goods movement — West Oakland and Richmond — should not be fettered by the availability of mandated matching funds.



Port of Oakland

Voters Ask State to Promote Smart Growth

In passing Propositions 1C and 84, California voters have challenged policy makers to rethink the transportation/land use connection. Since 1996, MTC has been a leader in promoting transit-friendly development that accommodates the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians — commonly referred to as “smart growth.” Our Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program provides capital and planning grants to local agencies, and since inception has provided \$67 million for 99 projects throughout the region.

MTC in 2005 adopted a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) policy that conditions discretionary regional funding on supportive local land-use plans and policies, with a focus on boosting housing density near transit. The region is currently undertaking the Focusing Our Vision project, a joint effort by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), MTC and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to identify priority development areas where future growth should be concentrated, along with resource protection areas where growth should be avoided. MTC’s key policy recommendations for Proposition 1C and 84 are designed to complement these efforts.

Create an Integrated and Focused Program

Propositions 1C and 84 establish a number of accounts to support sustainable communities, TOD and infill housing, as shown in the table below. Given that these programs promote similar goals, the funds should be administered jointly through an integrated program to maximize synergy and minimize bureaucratic overhead. The measures also contain funding for parks and urban greening projects — totaling \$710 million — some or all of which could be incorporated to maximize smart growth incentive funds available. Lastly, it is important that the funds are distributed in a targeted fashion — focused on high-density urban areas — rather than spread too thinly to have an impact.

Smart Growth Programs Established by Proposition 1C and Proposition 84

Name	Program Elements	Amount	Legislation Required
Regional Planning, Housing & Infill Incentive Account (<i>Proposition 1C</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital grants to promote infill housing, including water and sewer improvements, transportation improvements and brownfield cleanup Includes \$200 million cap for park creation that encourages infill development 	\$850 million	✓
Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Program (<i>Proposition 1C</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local assistance (in the form of grants for infrastructure improvements) to cities, counties, transit agencies and developers to develop higher density development within a quarter mile of a transit station Administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development 	\$300 million	
Regional Planning (<i>Proposition 84</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning grants and a revolving loan fund to reduce automobile use and fuel consumption, encourage greater infill and compact development, protect natural resources and agricultural lands, and revitalize community centers 	\$90 million	✓

Respect Priorities Established by Regions

California is a state of regions. All the larger regions have undertaken major regional planning efforts — known as “regional blueprints” — that favor compact, infill development aimed at supporting and revitalizing existing communities, maximizing transportation efficiency and conserving land resources. These plans were developed through inclusive and collaborative planning processes involving communities and stakeholders.

The state will have the greatest impact by targeting bond funds toward the implementation of these existing, consensus-based regional plans. There are two general approaches to giving regions a key role in this process:

- 1 Allocate funds to regions on a formula basis, and delegate to regional agencies the administration of a competitive grant program with project criteria set in statute; or
- 2 Delegate to regional agencies the job of reviewing and prioritizing project requests with final selection made by the state.

Either of these approaches could achieve excellent results. In our view, the most important consideration is that the program should complement and build upon the regional planning work already underway in the Bay Area and statewide.

Achieve Measurable Results

Projects and plans should be evaluated on the basis of short-term, on-the-ground results. MTC believes that the best measure of effective plans and/or projects that support smart growth is a simple one: planned and approved infill housing that is located near transit or job concentrations.

*“If we make walking and biking
a more practical choice for all
ages, we can combat congestion,
improve air quality and
promote better health all
at the same time.”*

— U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer

TLC Grant Supports Affordable Housing

MTC provided a \$45,000 TLC planning grant to improve pedestrian safety for cable car passengers, pedestrians and neighborhood residents at this multi-use, affordable housing project in San Francisco. The project includes 340 affordable family and senior housing units, a day care center, a senior center and ground-floor retail located at the Powell-Mason cable car terminus.



Taylor Street improvements, San Francisco

MTC Submits Region's Candidates for Corridor Mobility Improvement Account

On January 10, MTC adopted the region's priority candidates for funding from Proposition 1B's \$4.5 billion Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) — whose primary goal is to improve performance on the state's highly congested corridors. With approximately 85 percent of northern California's congestion occurring on Bay Area freeways, the region has high expectations for receiving a large share of the north's \$1.8 billion portion of CMIA funds.

While other programs, such as the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), are designed to ensure that every county receives its "fair share," the purpose and the unique opportunity presented by the CMIA is to target funds to the state's major traffic bottlenecks. MTC staff received almost \$4 billion worth of project proposals from the region's nine congestion management agencies and other local agencies. Analyzing these projects from a cost-benefit standpoint with an emphasis on relieving current congestion, our final submittal includes 18 projects for \$2 billion. MTC is confident these projects will provide excellent mobility benefits and are deliverable within the next six years.

The map opposite illustrates the location of the projects as well as the region's most congested corridors. The table on the next page illustrates the Bay Area's CMIA submittal, and details other funds committed to these projects.

The San Francisco Bay Area's CMIA Proposal

Congestion Relief/Carpool Lanes

- 1 **I-580 HOV lane:**
Hacienda Dr. to Greenville Rd.
- 2 **I-680 HOV lane extension:**
N. Main St. in Walnut Creek to SR 242
- 3 **I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange and I-80 HOV lane:**
Red Top Rd. to Airbase Parkway
- 4 **I-880 HOV lane extension:**
98th Ave. to Marina Blvd.
- 5 **I-880 HOV lane extension:**
SR 237 to U.S. 101
- 6 **SR 4 East HOV lane extension:**
Somerville Rd. to SR 160
- 7 **U.S. 101 HOV lane extension:**
Railroad Ave. to Wilfred Ave.
- 8 **U.S. 101 HOV lanes:**
Steele Ln. to Windsor River Rd.
- 9 **U.S. 101 Narrows HOV lane extension:**
SR 37 to SR 116

Congestion Relief/Operational and System Management Improvements

- 10 **U.S. 101 add lanes:** Marsh Rd. to SR 85
- 11 **U.S. 101 widening and interchanges:**
Yerba Buena Rd. to I-280/I-680
- 12 **U.S. 101/I-580 corridor improvements**
- 13 **I-880/I-280 Interchange:**
Includes Stevens Creek Blvd. and Winchester Blvd. off-ramps

Connectivity

- 14 **SR 12 Jameson Canyon widening**
- 15 **SR 24: Caldecott Tunnel fourth bore**

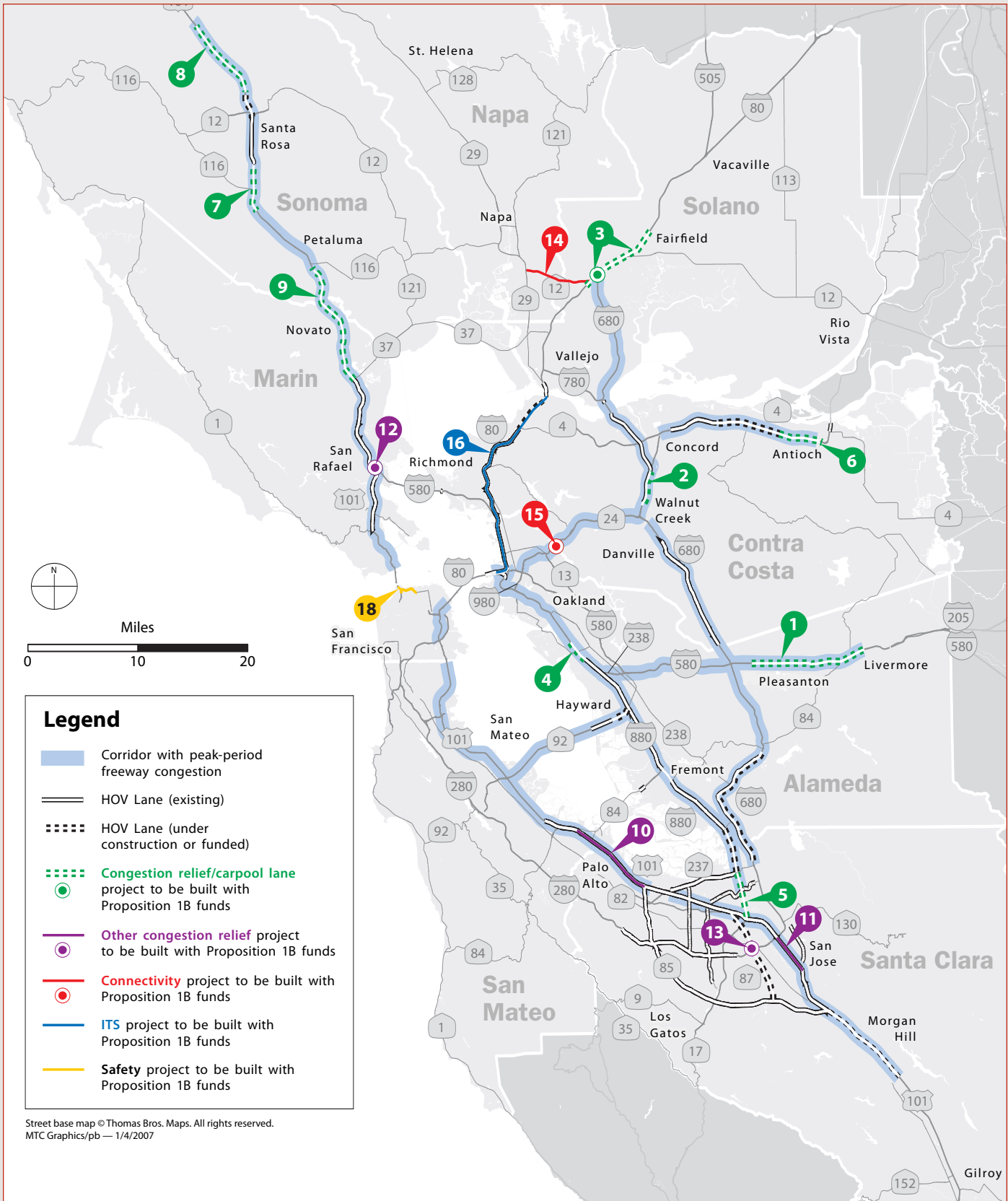
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

- 16 **I-80 Integrated Corridor Mobility**
- 17 **Regionwide system management**
(not mapped)

Safety

- 18 **South access to Golden Gate Bridge:**
Doyle Drive replacement

CMIA Recommended Projects



MTC Proposed Projects for Corridor Mobility Improvement Account

Dollars in thousands

					MTC Proposal	Proposition 1B/ State-Controlled Funds		Regional Discretionary Funds*	Other	Comments
County	Project	Congestion (vehicle hours of delay)	Total Project Cost	Committed Funds		ITIP I - Bond	SHOPP			
State Route 4 Corridor										
Contra Costa	Eastbound HOV extension from Somersville to SR 160	5,940	\$335,000	\$235,000	\$85,000			\$15,000		
State Route 12 Corridor										
Napa & Solano	Jameson Canyon widening — from 2 to 4 lanes	n/a	\$133,000	\$17,400	\$88,600			\$27,000		
State Route 24/I-680 Corridor										
Alameda & Contra Costa	SR 24 Caldecott Tunnel 4th bore	1,550	\$420,000	\$216,000	\$175,000			\$29,000		
Contra Costa	I-680 northbound HOV extension (North Main St. in Walnut Creek to SR 24)	1,040	\$21,000		\$10,500			\$10,500		
I-80 Corridor										
Solano	I-80/I-680/SR 12 interchange (second phase) and I-80 HOV extension	1,810	\$323,412	\$123,412	\$150,000	\$50,000				
Alameda & Contra Costa	Integrated Corridor Mobility	14,260	\$84,400		\$60,000				\$24,400	Other refers to the local Intelligent Transportation System/SHOPP category of the bond for San Pablo Avenue improvements
U.S. 101 Corridor — Peninsula										
San Mateo & Santa Clara	Additional lanes from Marsh Rd. to Rte 85 (including Willow Rd. interchange)	4,500	\$271,076	\$66,650	\$194,426			\$10,000		
Santa Clara	Widening and interchanges from Yerba Buena Rd. to I-280/I-680	2,450	\$104,220	\$61,220	\$30,000			\$13,000		
U.S. 101 Corridor — San Francisco and North Bay										
San Francisco	South access to Golden Gate Bridge: Doyle Dr. replacement	n/a	\$810,000	\$155,271	\$175,000		\$375,000	\$54,000	\$51,000	Base replacement project cost of roughly \$550 million to be covered by state CMIA and SHOPP; remainder future federal, RTIP and Prop. K funds
Marin	US 101/I-580 Greenbrae Corridor Complex	590	\$20,000		\$20,000					
Marin & Sonoma	US 101 Narrows: HOV extension from Atherton Ave. to south of the Petaluma River Bridge and HOV lane conversion through Novato	1,840	\$369,000	\$67,000	\$160,000	\$50,000		\$52,000	\$40,000	Other refers to \$40 million in future federal funds
Sonoma	HOV lanes Railroad Ave. to Santa Rosa Ave.	280	\$184,877	\$107,242	\$77,635					
Sonoma	HOV lanes — North Phase A and B (Steele Ln. to Windsor)	1,480	\$164,600	\$51,788	\$94,812					
I-580/I-238 Corridor										
Alameda	I-580 HOV lane: Hacienda Dr./Foothill Blvd. to Greenville Rd. includes Isabel Ave./SR 84/I-580 interchange improvements	12,170	\$423,100	\$131,000	\$265,100		\$27,000			
I-880 Corridor										
Santa Clara	HOV extension from SR 237 in Milpitas to US 101 in San Jose	1,730	\$142,700		\$127,700			\$15,000		
Alameda	Widen for HOV Lanes southbound from 98th Ave to Marina Blvd. (includes system management)	410	\$108,000		\$108,000					
Regional System Management										
Regional	Regionwide system management	1,420–13,490	\$101,900		\$101,900					
Total			\$4,016,285	\$1,231,983	\$1,923,673	\$100,000	\$402,000	\$225,500	\$115,400	

Note: Project cost estimates are indicated in year-of-award dollars.

Abbreviations: CMIA — Corridor Mobility Improvement Account; ITIP — Interregional Transportation Improvement Program; RTIP — Regional Transportation Improvement Program; SHOPP — State Highway Operation and Protection Program

* RTIP bond funds and 2008 RTIP

Improve Security and Emergency Preparedness

With more than 1 million passengers riding the Bay Area's trains, buses and ferries each day, transit security and disaster preparedness are essential not only to the region's mobility but also to public safety. By including a \$1 billion Transit System Safety, Security and Disaster Response Program in Proposition 1B, along with \$100 million for port security, the Legislature clearly has recognized the importance of strengthening the state's transportation security. The challenge ahead is to ensure that these funds are targeted where they are most needed.



The upper deck of the Cypress Freeway (I-880) collapsed during the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 (above); demolition crews worked to tear down damaged highway.



The upper deck of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge collapsed during the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989.

Golden Guardian Exercise Tested the Region's Readiness

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, MTC has increased efforts to improve regional emergency planning and response. In 2006 MTC purchased satellite phones for nine major transit operators, the nine counties, and the regional offices of the California Highway Patrol (CHP), Caltrans and the state Office of Emergency Services (OES). In recognition of the importance of communication during an emergency, MTC also is funding the ongoing costs of these phones.

Bay Area transportation agencies have worked together to plan and coordinate response to regionwide emergencies since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and have held annual drills for the past 10 years. The November 2006 "Golden Guardian" exercise brought MTC together with other transportation and emergency management agencies — including Caltrans, the CHP, nine transit agencies and six county offices of emergency management — to test the region's response to a repeat of the 1906 magnitude 7.9 San Francisco earthquake, plus several major aftershocks. The key findings for the transportation agencies were as follows:

- All the transportation agencies were able to set up their emergency operation centers (EOCs) and to provide MTC with status reports, but each aftershock necessitated a reinspection of transportation facilities, which made it difficult to continue providing status reports.
- Most agency emergency staff understood their individual roles and responsibilities, but were not familiar with their agency's or the region's emergency operation plans, and therefore did not use those plans during the exercise even though copies were available in each EOC.
- The satellite telephone system was available to the participating agencies during the simulated communication blackout but many staff were reluctant to use it, even when other communication systems were overloaded.
- Several agencies need to upgrade their EOC equipment and layout, or need a larger EOC.

The purpose of exercises such as the Golden Guardian is to practice procedures outlined in emergency plans and to identify opportunities for improvement. Over the next few months, MTC will work with the participating agencies to address these deficiencies.

Ensure a Risk-Based Approach to the Transit Security and Disaster Response Program

We urge the Legislature to establish a distribution policy for the \$1 billion in transit security and disaster response funds primarily on the basis of risk, threat and consequence, while also providing a minimum level of funding to help operators meet federal transit security requirements and fulfill emergency response needs. For the Bay region in particular, MTC will advocate for new ferry infrastructure to be used in the event of a major disaster.

Establish the State Office of Homeland Security as a Division within the State Office of Emergency Services

While terrorism has been the key threat on the nation's radar in recent years, when it comes to emergencies the response should follow the same basic protocols regardless of the type of emergency. Under this approach — known as comprehensive emergency management — responsibility for identifying and mitigating all hazards, as well as the preparation of a coordinated response to and recovery from natural and man-made disasters, is vested in a single entity.

At the state level, responsibility for comprehensive emergency management should be vested in one entity in the executive branch, rather than the current bifurcated structure in which earthquakes and other natural disasters, are handled by the state OES while terrorism falls under the jurisdiction of the state Office of Homeland Security (OHS). While OHS is budgeted as a division within the OES, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) the two entities operate largely independent of one another, resulting in confusion over roles and responsibilities.

To address this problem, Assembly Member Pedro Nava recently introduced Assembly Bill 38. The bill would make OHS an organizational division within OES, consistent with recommendations made by the LAO. MTC supports this approach and looks forward to working with the Legislature to improve the state's as well as the region's readiness for natural and made-made emergencies .



The 1991 Oakland firestorm led officials to close State Route 24 approaching the Caldecott tunnel.



Emergency personnel worked to divert flooding in Marin County last winter.

Joe Sharp

Remove Barriers to Public-Private Partnerships



BART constructed the San Francisco International Airport Extension project using the design-build contracting method, but this method is not yet available for highway projects in California.

Authorize Additional Design-Build Projects

MTC supports allowing Caltrans to use design-build and design-sequencing contracting methods for transportation projects. According to a 2006 report prepared by the Legislative Analyst's Office, local agencies with design-build authority in California reported time savings, fewer claims and less litigation. Eight states (Arizona, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Utah and Washington) and many local agencies in California already have some type of design-build authority. By extending this option to Caltrans — particularly in the wake of the passage of Proposition 1B — the Legislature can ensure that transportation funds will improve mobility as soon as possible.

Allow a Mix of Private and State Funds

Under current state law, a project that receives any state funding generally is not allowed to receive private funding such as tolls or concession charges. This prohibition constrains the ability of transportation agencies to take advantage of private financing in an era in which private funds could play a key role in supplementing inadequate public funds.

One Bay Area project that has faced this constraint is the BART Oakland Airport Connector. With approximately \$140 million in airport concession charges serving as an integral part of the project's financing plan, BART has had to swap its State Transportation Improvement Program funds with sales tax revenue from another local agency. While this example illustrates that there may be creative ways for agencies to work around the current prohibition, it also illustrates the time-consuming administrative hurdles that transportation agencies face when they develop public-private partnerships. Given the vast funding shortfalls facing transportation, along with the growing recognition of the need for private funds, removing this restriction should be one of the Legislature's top priorities in 2007.

“We cannot deliver the objectives of the Strategic Growth Plan without private investment.”

— Caltrans Director Will Kempton

Simplify Approval Process for New High-Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes

MTC's long-range plan proposes building on the existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane system to create a regional network of high-occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes by converting existing HOV lanes to HOT lanes and expanding the HOV/HOT system where possible. HOT lanes allow people who drive alone to use specially designated carpool lanes for a fee.

HOT lanes are a proven concept; the earliest facilities opened in Southern California nearly 10 years ago and other HOT lanes are now in operation in several states. Benefits include the more efficient use of freeway capacity and a faster, more reliable travel option for carpoolers and express bus riders as well as toll payers. Revenues remaining after operations and maintenance of HOT lanes could be used to help fund expansion of the HOV/HOT lane network.

Legislation Enacted Last Year Imposes Strict Hurdle on New HOT Lanes

The Legislature last year authorized four HOT lane proposals and four truck toll lanes statewide. Chapter 32, Statutes of 2006 (Assembly Bill 1467, Nuñez) requires that transportation planning agencies submit HOT lane applications to the CTC, who then must conduct at least one public hearing in both Northern and Southern California for each project. The CTC then submits the application to the Legislature for approval or rejection, through the enactment of a statute.

While a subsequent bill — Chapter 542, Statutes of 2006 (Assembly Bill 521, Runner) — was adopted to make the goods-movement-related toll provisions of Assembly Bill 1467 less onerous, this bill made no changes to the HOT lane provisions. As a result, the provisions for approving California's first privately operated truck toll lanes are now easier than those for approving HOT lanes, a tested approach for managing congestion. Accordingly, MTC recommends the following amendments to Assembly Bill 1467 (Nuñez):

- 1 Bring the Legislature's oversight of HOT lanes on par with their oversight of goods-movement-oriented toll lanes. Specifically, provide that unless the Legislature rejects a HOT lane proposal within 60 days of receiving an application from the CTC, it shall be deemed approved.
- 2 Reduce the requirement for public hearings to one public hearing in the appropriate part of the state, rather than one in both Northern and Southern California.

Regional HOT Lane Study Underway

MTC and Caltrans, in cooperation with partner agencies, are undertaking a Regional High-Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes Feasibility and Implementation Study. The study is meant to determine whether a regional network of HOT lanes is warranted, define a phased implementation plan and provide a regional context for projects under development in Alameda and Santa Clara counties. Phase 1 of the study examined two potential HOT lane networks:

- Existing and funded network — developed by converting existing HOV lanes, those under construction and those funded in 2007
- Connected network — fills in gaps and extends the HOV system

Phase 2 — beginning in early 2007 — will explore key governance issues for a regional network and develop a preliminary financial plan.



Interstate 15 HOT lanes in San Diego County during the afternoon commute

SANDAG

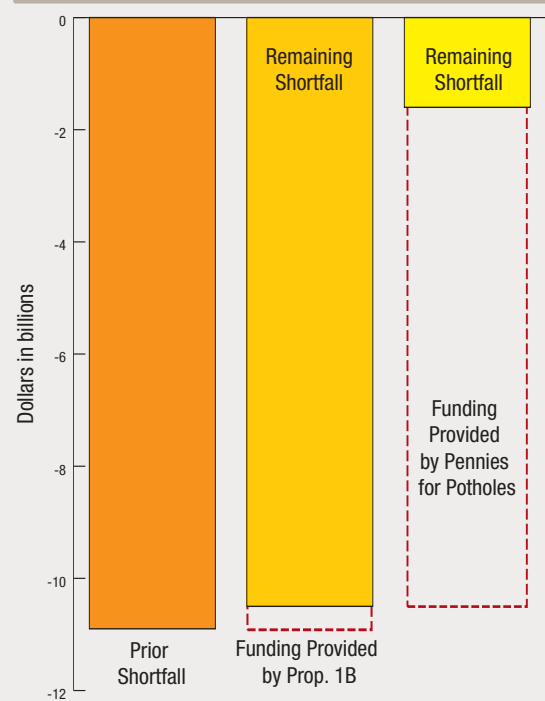
Pennies for Potholes: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Propositions 1A and 1B will provide the Bay Area's local streets and roads with approximately \$1.6 billion over the next ten years. Despite this substantial infusion of funding, the Bay Area's aging local street and road network continues to face an unacceptable funding shortfall — close to \$11 billion over 25 years. Addressing deteriorating pavement early can save substantial sums in the long run.

To address this shortfall, MTC is proposing legislation that would authorize a ballot measure in the nine-county region for a “transportation user fee” imposed on gasoline purchased in the region at a maximum rate of 10-cents per gallon. The fee would be pegged to the construction cost index to ensure that revenues keep pace with the cost of repairs.

Based on Caltrans' most recent gasoline consumption data, this fee would generate approximately \$320 million annually (in 2006 dollars). This additional revenue stream would provide a tremendous benefit to the region, generating almost \$9 billion through 2030, and covering over 80 percent of the shortfall, as shown at right. Assuming an average fuel efficiency of 20 miles per gallon and average annual mileage of 14,000 miles, the fee would cost the average motorist approximately \$6 per month.

Impact of Pennies for Potholes Proposal on Streets and Roads Funding Shortfall



Expenditures would be fully dedicated to local street and road (pavement and non-pavement) needs because of legal requirements related to fees. Local

road improvements benefit bus riders, bicyclists and pedestrians in addition to automobile users. Better road conditions make for a faster, smoother bus ride, and MTC's routine accommodation policy requires that bicycle and pedestrian needs are taken into account in all local road improvements funded with regional discretionary funds.



One of the region's many bumpy roads

Improve Access to Transportation for Low-Income Residents

Recognizing the importance of providing mobility to the low-income members of our community, MTC's Transportation 2030 Plan includes a \$216 million commitment toward critical transit routes and other transportation services that provide a vital lifeline for low-income residents. As part of this effort, community-based transportation plans were developed for Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties and are currently underway in San Mateo and Sonoma counties. These plans identify a number of common needs: in particular, the need for more affordable transit in the form of subsidized transit passes and services specific to low income populations.

Broaden Eligibility for State Transit Assistance

Community-based transportation plans reveal that subsidized transit passes are a key priority in many low-income neighborhoods. However, transit passes for low-income individuals do not qualify for funding from our primary Lifeline fund source — State Transit Assistance (STA) — as the law does not permit “low income” as an eligible category for unique or customized treatment. To address this need, MTC will pursue legislation to broaden the eligibility of STA funds for low-income transit passes and services unique to low-income populations.

Simplify Administration of State Transit Assistance

In addition to broadening eligibility, MTC supports efforts to streamline the administration of STA. The state controller is required to make a preliminary estimate of STA funds each January, and transit operators use this estimate to develop their operating budget for the upcoming year. Under current practice, this estimate is revised twice, once in August when funds are initially disbursed and again at the end of the fiscal year in June. Factors that determine each operator's share fluctuate on the basis of many variables, some beyond the operator's control such as other agencies' ridership or local funding, creating an extremely volatile budgetary environment. The twice-yearly revision of the fund estimate causes further budgeting instability.

To address this problem, MTC will work with other agencies statewide to support legislation that would require that the revenue factor for a given fiscal year be made on the basis of the August estimate at the beginning of that fiscal year. This will improve efficiency as well as increase funding predictability for transit operators statewide.



Community members weigh in on regional long-range plans at an MTC-sponsored community meeting.

Dan Krause

Toll Bridge Projects Protect Public Safety, Improve Mobility

Building on the financial foundation and oversight structure established by Assembly Bill 144 (Hancock) in 2005, the Bay Area's crucial toll bridge seismic retrofit program is moving full-speed ahead. The new oversight agency established by the Legislature — the Toll Bridge Project Oversight Committee (TBPOC) — now issues monthly reports on the program's status, providing greater accountability and transparency, and ensuring that any cost or schedule issues are identified early.



Last Skyway segment being lifted into place

Bay Bridge Skyway Project Almost Complete

The 1.3-mile Skyway section of the long-awaited new Bay Bridge East Span is now more than 90 percent built, with the two sleek parallel structures slated for completion later this year. A fabrication yard established at the Port of Stockton to cast the Skyway's 452 concrete segments closed in December 2006 after the last of the precisely engineered segments was transported by barge to the bridge site and hoisted into place above San Francisco Bay. Work already is underway on the foundations for the dramatic self-anchored suspension (SAS) portion of the new East Span.

New Benicia-Martinez Bridge to Open This Year

The new Benicia-Martinez Bridge, which will carry five lanes of traffic traveling northbound on Interstate 680 from Contra Costa County to Solano County, is scheduled to open to traffic in late 2007. Funded through the voter-approved Regional Measure 1 toll program administered by MTC, the \$1.2 billion project includes an all-new interchange between Interstates 680 and 780. The new bridge served as a proving ground for several technical breakthroughs, including new processes for cooling poured-in-place concrete and the use of "bubble curtains" to protect migratory fish from sound waves.



Benicia-Martinez Bridge new span

Bay Bridge West Approach Project nears Homestretch

The retrofit-by-replacement of the mile-long Bay Bridge West Approach through downtown San Francisco — a delicate operation that involves swapping the seismically vulnerable existing structure for a modern, earthquake-safe freeway — cleared its biggest technical hurdles in 2006 and is now steaming toward completion in 2009.

One of the key milestones was achieved last year with two weekend closures of the eastbound Bay Bridge (in June and again over the three-day Labor Day weekend), allowing work crews to demolish more than 1,000 feet of fragile roadway in what would have otherwise taken several weeks. The TBPOC (which includes MTC Executive Director Steve

Heminger, Caltrans Director Will Kempton and California Transportation Commission Executive Director John Barna), engineered a full-scale information blitz to alert the public to the closures, and arranged for BART and Bay Area ferry systems to provide additional transbay service during these weekends. As a result, impacts on Bay Area traffic were kept to a minimum.

More Milestones On Tap

Bay Area toll bridge projects will reach several more milestones in the months ahead. These include completion of foundation work for the SAS portion of the new Bay Bridge East Span and the start of construction on an all-new interchange between Interstate 880 and State Route 92 in Hayward. This \$196 million interchange project, to be financed with Regional Measure 1 toll funds, will replace a long-outmoded 1960s era interchange, dramatically improving traffic flow to and from the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge and alleviating one of the Bay Area's most notorious congestion hot spots.

Disappearing from the Bay Area highway network in 2007 will be the original Carquinez Bridge, which was replaced in 2003 by the state-of-the-art suspension span that now carries westbound Interstate 80 traffic from Vallejo to Crockett and is named for the late ironworker and bridge builder Alfred Zampa. Careful piece-by-piece dismantling of the historic 1927 bridge began in spring 2006 and is on track for completion by December 2007.



A careful balance is maintained between construction and deconstruction on the the Bay Bridge's new West Approach.



Carquinez 1927 span deconstruction

Bay Area Toll Bridge Seismic Retrofit Projects	Seismic Safety Status
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge East Span Replacement	Construction
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge West Approach Replacement	Construction
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge West Span Seismic Retrofit	Completed
San Mateo-Hayward Bridge Seismic Retrofit	Completed
Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Seismic Retrofit	Completed
Eastbound Carquinez Bridge Seismic Retrofit	Completed
Benicia-Martinez Bridge Seismic Retrofit	Completed

More Bay Area Drivers Get on FasTrak®

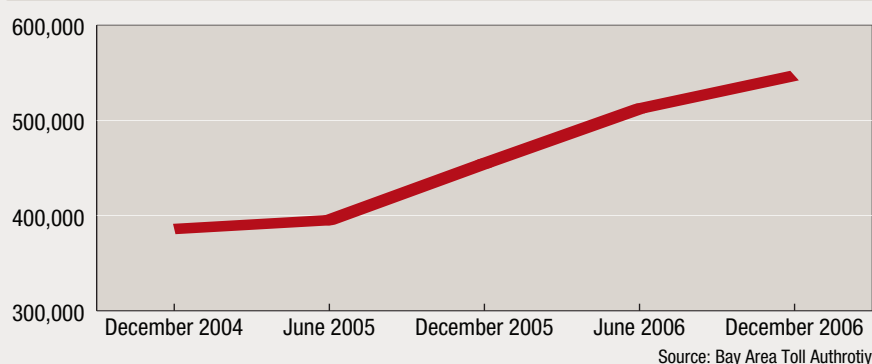
FasTrak® — the popular electronic toll collection system administered by an arm of MTC, the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) — shifted into high gear in 2006, with enrollment swelling by over 20 percent to more than 550,000 accounts. To further expand and improve the FasTrak program, BATA is implementing a comprehensive two-year plan that includes enhanced marketing and distribution of FasTrak toll tags; converting more lanes at bridge toll plazas to FasTrak-only; and using new technology to improve operating efficiencies.

Strategic Plan Will Create More FasTrak-Only Lanes

FasTrak allows motorists to pre-pay tolls in any lane at any of the Bay Area's toll bridges, eliminating the need to stop and pay cash. The payoff is twofold: reduced congestion at the toll plazas and reduced emissions from idling vehicles. A FasTrak-only lane can handle about three times as many vehicles

per hour as a standard lane. As infrastructure improvements called for in the new FasTrak Strategic Plan are implemented during the summer of 2007, motorists who use the electronic toll tags can expect even greater time savings. But drivers who continue to pay their tolls with cash likely will experience increased delays at some toll plazas, especially during peak periods.

Growth in FasTrak® Enrollment 2004–06



Open Road Tolling to Debut on New Benicia Bridge

One innovative element of the new plan is the introduction of open-road tolling (allowing motorists to pass through the toll facility at highway speeds using their FasTrak toll tags) at the new Benicia-Martinez Bridge toll plaza when the new span opens in late 2007. Already in use on HOT lanes on select Southern California freeways, this will mark the first deployment of open-road tolling technology in the Bay Area.



Computer rendering of open-road tolling on Benicia-Martinez Bridge

Marketing Efforts Include Lowering Prepayment Balance and Retail Distribution

To make FasTrak enrollment easier and more convenient, BATA in 2006 reduced the minimum initial prepaid toll balance to \$25 from the previous \$40, and began making the palm-sized toll tags available at select Safeway and Costco stores. Customers also can enroll online at 511.org or bayareafastrak.org, via phone by calling 511, or in person at the FasTrak customer service center in San Francisco. FasTrak customers were also offered a one-month reprieve on the recent \$1 toll increase, which went into effect January 1, 2007.

Bay Area Launches TransLink® Smart Card

The Bay Area's TransLink® system — the most sophisticated transit-fare smart card program in the U.S. — began its regionwide rollout in late 2006, with start-up passengers using the distinctive green cards on all AC Transit, Dumbarton Express and Golden Gate Transit bus and ferry routes. The powerful, versatile and reloadable TransLink card:

- Eliminates the need for exact change and/or multiple transit passes;
- Automatically grants transfers and calculates appropriate discounts — even for passengers moving from one transit system to another;
- Allows card and balance replacement for riders whose TransLink card is lost or stolen;
- Improves transit agencies' service planning, marketing and financial accounting; and
- Allows faster boarding.



TransLink, the new transit-fare smart card, enables Bay Area commuters to pay transit fares electronically.

BART and SF Muni to Get On Board Later This Year

Phased expansion of the TransLink system will continue in 2007 with the addition of the Bay Area's two largest transit operators, BART and San Francisco Muni, as well as the Caltrain commuter railroad line. SamTrans and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority are scheduled to come aboard in 2008, with other smaller transit agencies joining the system by 2010.

How TransLink Works

TransLink stores value in the form of electronic cash and transit passes. To pay a fare, a rider simply "tags" the card by touching it to one of the card readers installed on buses or at the entrance to transit stations and the card reader automatically deducts the correct fare, including any appropriate discounts. With Translink, transit riders will never again have to fumble for exact change or juggle multiple passes and tickets.

Customers can order TransLink cards — and add value to them — online, by phone or by mail. Cards also are available at transit agency ticket offices and at some 75 participating retail locations, including Raley's. With TransLink's convenient autoload feature, customers can even set up their cards to reload automatically using a secure fund transfer from a bank account or credit card.



TransLink customer uses smart card on AC Transit bus.

511: Leading Edge System Keeps Bay Area on the Move

MTC's 511 traveler information service continues to be a hit with Bay Area travelers, generating more than 450,000 calls and 1.5 million Web visits each month. With a range of features unparalleled by 511 systems anywhere else in the country, the Bay Area's award-winning 511 service provides current, on-demand information 24/7 — via phone or Web — on traffic conditions; transit routes, fares and schedules; and bicycling and carpool/vanpool options.



Along busy Bay Area freeways, changeable message signs display minute-to-minute 511 driving times.

511 Driving TimesSM Expanded

Among the most popular new features to the 511 site is the 511 Driving Times service, which uses several high-tech systems — including FasTrak toll tags — to calculate current travel times from point to point along the Bay Area highway network. Now covering about 90 percent of the region's freeway miles, the 511 Driving Times service was expanded in 2006 to include more corridors, including State Routes 1 and 92 along the San Mateo County coast, and Lombard Street, 19th Avenue and Park Presidio in San Francisco.

Predict-a-TripSM Takes the Guesswork out of Trip Planning

In our continued effort to provide superb customer service to 511 users, MTC will be releasing two new features in the first four months of 2007. They are "Predict-a-Trip" and "MY 511SM." Predict-a-Trip — to be launched in February 2007 — is a feature of the 511 traffic Web site that provides typical driving time and speed information for selected driving routes during specific times of the day. Users choose a route and then select the day of the week and time of day for which they are interested in receiving typical travel times and speeds. Predict-a-Trip provides users with a valuable planning tool for their out-of-the-ordinary trips.

MY 511SM Personalizes Traveler Information

Following the trend on the Internet towards user-defined content, MY 511 is a personalized traveler information tool that will provide faster and more convenient access to traveler information for predefined, commonly requested trips. Starting this spring, sign-up for the service will be available at 511.org where users will define and save their most popular trips as a first step in building their traveler information home page and establishing their phone preferences. On their home pages, users will automatically see their saved trips with corresponding live travel times and traffic condition information. On the transit side, registrants will see the next real-time transit arrival predictions (currently, only for San Francisco Muni's light rail and F line) for their saved trips.

MY 511 registrants also will be able to sign up to receive, via e-mail or phone text, traffic condition alerts and/or transit arrival alerts for their preferred trips. Information on the most severe traffic and transit incidents impacting the wider nine-county region also will be provided through alerts.



Lavonda Prier had the distinction of being 511's 10-millionth caller in April 2006.

Laurie Kemmel

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Cover: [top] Scenic of San Francisco with San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and Mt. Diablo in background – © 2006 Barrie Rokeach; [bottom left to right] Seismic retrofit progress on the

new Richmond-San Rafael Bridge – John Huseby, Caltrans; Passengers boarding BART train at San Francisco International Airport (SFO) – courtesy of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART); Transit-oriented housing in Redwood City – Peter Beeler.



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